

208954US-2RD CONT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :  
Hideaki FUKUZAWA, et al. : EXAMINER: UNASSIGNED  
SERIAL NO.: New Continuation Application :  
FILED: Herewith : GROUP ART UNIT: UNASSIGNED  
FOR: MAGNETORESISTANCE EFFECT ELEMENT,  
MAGNETIC HEAD, MAGNETIC HEAD  
ASSEMBLY, MAGNETIC STORAGE SYSTEM

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

SIR:

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend this application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 109, beginning at line 21, please delete the paragraph and replace it with the following new paragraph:

To realize such good close-packed plane orientation, the spin valve films may be formed in an atmosphere with impurities such as oxygen gas and others therein being minimized as much as possible. For example, for forming the films, employable are a deposition method in which is used an apparatus capable of pre-degassing the system to a level of around  $10^9$  Torr; a deposition method in which is used a sputtering target of which the oxygen content is lowered to at most 500 ppm; a substrate bias sputtering method in which a controlled degree of energy is applied to the sputtered atoms while the atoms are